

Mayor Jones called the Study Session to order. He noted he coached Todd Fletcher in Grid Kids.

Todd Fletcher said he wanted to make sure all Council Members are aware of the history of Carlon Park and take a look at where GYGSA is headed in the future. He stated in 2004 when GYGSA moved to Selah from Union Gap, they played on three fields. They then put in a dugout at a cost of about \$2,100, and in 2005 netted over the top of the entire complex to prevent foul balls from causing problems. In 2006 it was obvious that they needed to some major renovations to the park, and GYGSA pledged \$25-30,000 to repair fields. At that point it was decided that it would be in the best long-term interests of the City to tear down the existing facility and create an entirely new fastpitch complex.

He noted the handout enumerates what happened from there. GYGSA pledged \$100,000 to the rebuilding effort and paid the City \$75,000 of that up front, with \$5,000 paid annually over the next five years. Along with that were the signage, the lighted scoreboards and volunteers assisting with demolition. He noted in 2008 GYGSA will put protective screens over bleachers so there will be some protection and a little shade. He noted there has been a wonderful relationship between the Parks Department and the City as a whole. He said over the years GYGSA has donated approximately \$200,000 in money and/or effort toward the fastpitch park. The field has been growing in recognition by teams across the state. He stated his belief that this can be one of the best parks in the northwest. He thanked Jeff and the Parks Department.

Frank Sweet asked how many tournaments will be held at Carlon this year.

Mr. Fletcher responded that GYGSA is running fourteen tournaments, and YVCC will host cross-over tournaments where 26 teams will be competing. He stressed that these are girls with families, making it a tremendous opportunity for businesses in the community.

Mayor Jones said many years ago we sat here and dreamed about this park. At that time, friends told him to "go girls" because of the potential revenues of girls traveling with their families to tournaments.

Brian Harris said he is glad to see Todd Fletcher taking over GYGSA and noted the use of scoreboards would be helpful.

Mr. Fletcher noted it's been the issue of how to coordinate controllers. He said if we lose controllers, we're in trouble. He said they are trying to find a way to get around those problems. He noted the scoreboards are on a different electrical system. There ensued discussion about how to have teams run the tournaments and control the scoreboards without taking any chances.

Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Hagler noted GYGSA has been great to work with.

Todd Fletcher expressed his hope any kind of field can have this kind of partnership.

Mayor Jones said two softball fields are ready for play now.

Rich Austin, Sports Director for Yakima Valley Sports Commission, said he started in December to get the brochure out in January. He handed out brochures, noting that Carlon is the best girls' fastpitch complex in Central WA and one of the best in the Pacific Northwest.

He reviewed the information in his handout, showing a comparison of numbers of participants, room nights and estimated economic impact since completion of Carlon Park, as follows:

2006 GYGSA tournaments in Carlon Park brought in an estimated:

- 2,000 people
- 1,400 room nights
- \$500,000 economic impact

2007 GYGSA tournaments in Carlon Park brought in an estimated:

- 3,800 people
- 2,150 room nights
- \$900,000 economic impact

2008 GYGSA tournaments in Carlon Park are estimated to bring in:

- 5,000 people
- 3,600 room nights
- \$1,250,000 economic impact

Additional events brought to Carlon Park by GYGSA, either in whole or in part:

- WASA 10&Under State Tournament (July 2007)
- University of Washington Scrimmage (September 2007)
- Dry Out Softball Tournament (April 2008)
- NWAACC (April 2008) (Community College)
- WIAA 2A State Softball Tournament (May 2008)
- WASA 1 6&Under State Tournament (July 2008)
- ASA 10&Under Regional Tournament (July 2008)
- Working on Western Regional Tournament (2010)

The Yakima Valley Sports Commission helps promote Carlon Park in the following ways:

- Sports Commission website www.yakimasports.org
- Yakima Valley Sports Facilities Guide (Initially published in 2007, to be updated as necessary)
- Sports Travel Baseball and Softball Facilities Guide (Fall 2007)
- Sports Travel Feature Column on the Yakima Valley (August 2007)
- Meetings with Tournament Directors and/or Officials

The Yakima Valley Sports Commission helps support GYGSA:

- Writing and designing bid packets and materials
- Work with local hotel properties on GYGSA's behalf
- Solicitation of complimentary hotel rooms for special event officials
- Meeting with ASA Directors and State Officials on special events

He further noted the Yakima Valley Sports Commission help to design packets, works with GYGSA and hotels to comp rooms for umpires, meets with ASA softball officials, etc.

Mayor Jones said the Commission has been doing a great job. He said already Selah has a hotel coming.

Rich Austin stated a hotel will further enhance the park.

Todd Fletcher stated once we have teams here, they are going to want to come back. He noted Seattle and Portland has people making a living doing tournaments, but in most places volunteers run tournaments and money can go directly into the facility.

Rich Austin said if the tournaments are here, the local teams don't go away from home and local dollars stay here.

Councilman Keith Larson asked if GYGSA has a wish list of what they'd like to see improved upon or done.

Todd Fletcher said they have those discussions all the time. He noted paving and screening are premium now, because we need more shade, but other things will come up.

Councilman Larson said Jeff Hagler needs to keep that stuff in front of the Council.

Mayor Jones said he thought as he was walking by Carlon this morning that it would be nice to put some trees out in center field by the veterinary clinic with some picnic tables.

Councilman John Tierney asked what this has done for our Parks Department revenues.

Jeff Hagler said Parks receives some direct fees from rental of facility, however the bigger amount goes to the community.

Councilman Keith Larson said a small percentage of concession proceeds come to the City.

Jeff Hagler said the Council came up with a full time person for park maintenance.

Frank Sweet asked if we recoup our cost for that person during tournament times.

Mr. Hagler said we do recoup maintenance and field preparation.

Allen Schmid addressed the Council, noting he thinks the City needs to be more involved with the Sports Commission to get more of an insight into what it is. He said GYGSA is always looking for people to be involved. He noted the City is taking on the running of two or three tournaments that are on the GYGSA schedule. He said that includes collecting fees and scheduling. He noted Danny Speer at present will be the contact, and Allen himself will serve as on-site tournament director. He emphasized that Selah is a small community with few opportunities to increase our income through sales tax. He said with the growth we have right now and the sale of land and new businesses on North Wenas will create increased revenue. He encouraged the Council to take a look at increases in sale taxes, and when these increases provide money to the community, to keep that in mind and don't let the facilities decrease in any way. He noted McGonagle can be as big as Carlon, and can have an equal impact. He warned the Council not to look at parks as a dark hole that sucks money, rather to think of the money generated in Selah businesses because of the parks. He urged Council Members to go out to Carlon and take a look at the cover. He noted it provides 60% shade, but is not rain proof.

Councilwoman Denise Nichols asked if Wood Field is in the brochure. Several people pointed it out. She noted she and Bill Harris are both on the executive board of the sports commission.

Allen Schmid predicted that within 3-5 years, we will also have a AA state baseball tournament here.

Councilwoman Nichols said it's very competitive to get these WIAA tournaments and keep them.

Mayor Jones said he noticed that at the basketball tournament, they had a dinner for everybody before the tourney. He asked if they do that before softball tournaments.

Rich Austin stated they do not. He said the lodging association donates food for the A and B basketball tournaments, but nothing like that is done for softball at the present, nor is it done for volleyball or baseball. He noted the local hotel association donates 100 rooms.

Denise Nichols asked about business sponsorship of a team.

Rich Austin said basketball teams are hosted by a business. The business may give them entry fees or a parking pass. Business sponsorships build relationships with kids over the years. He noted we could look into that.

Councilwoman Nichols asked if the sports commission would do leg work to make that happen for softball in Selah or would Jeff

Rich Austin said they would work together. He said it is something that's highly successful. He spoke of cheerleader breakfasts during the basketball tournament to focus on the cheerleaders. He noted that really differentiates Yakima tournaments from other state tournaments. He said if the kids are happy, then their parents and coaches are happy.

Jeff Hagler noted he is working on a welcome packet with Selah Chamber.

Brian Harris noted Wenatchee gave out apples at one tournament.

Todd Fletcher said one host site gave team members bottled water.

Mayor Jones thanked Rich Austin and Todd Fletcher for coming today. He thanked Allen Schmid for his input.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet announced the Selah By-Pass reroute is out of the House's budget. He noted Senator King is working to keep it in on the Senate side, and it is still in the Governor's budget. He stated we don't have political clout; six projects have been dropped out and two of them are on the eastside.

Denise Nichols said her understanding was that it was funded.

Frank Sweet said we were funded, but it is still up to the Legislature, which still has control. He said the worst case scenario is the design work will be completed this year and the rest will not happen till after 2023. He said it's not dead yet.

Councilman John Tierney noted the irony that matches for some west side projects have not been met.

Frank Sweet said elected officials are going to do what they are going to do.

Councilwoman Summer Derrey asked why they dropped it.

Frank Sweet responded that there may be a budget shortfall; it's a give and take situation depending on who needs what done.

Mayor Jones said he's glad Curtis King is working to keep it is on the Senate side.

Councilman Overby noted how much costs would increase by 2023.

Private conversations ensued as the Study session ended at 3:56pm.